

# River Currents

Volume 15, Issue 2

June 1994



1. Delivering Quality
2. Soldiers' And Sailors' Act
4. Field Of Dreams
5. Going Nuts

| Work-Life | Section |
|-----------|---------|
|-----------|---------|

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 7.  | Work-Life And Leadership                                     |
| 8.  | Achieving Your Marriage Potential                            |
| 10. | Some Sobering Facts About Alcohol                            |
| 11. | 1-900-RIP-U-OFF  |
| 12. | Our Last Goodbyes<br>Crayons Recalled                        |
| 13. | What Is The CPO Academy All About<br>Fit For Life            |
| 14. | On The Road With Work-Life                                   |
| 15. | PCS Entitlements Are Now Taxable<br>Help For Managing Change |
| 16. | Retirement/Separation/Transition                             |
| 17. | Sending Your Child To Summer Camp                            |
| 19. | Survivor Of The Leopold                                      |
| 24. | Surprise Surprise  |

**Front Cover:**

*Coast Guard Cutter Kanawha crewmen set river aid. --*  
Photo By PA2 Rob Raskiewicz

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# *"The joy of work produces the greatest performance."*

by RADM Paul M. Blayney

District Commander

Does the Coast Guard provide you the opportunity to maximize your potential? Do you feel responsible for making the whole organization work better? Do you work as a team member to continually improve overall performance? Is your work unit structured to allow you to do what needs to be done and to reward you for accomplishing it?

As district commander, I want the answer to each of these questions to be a resounding yes. Why? Because people who answer yes to these questions are people whose focus is on the customer and whose actions are empowered. People who answer yes deliver success.

Quality products, whether buoys on the river, inspections of commercial barges or administrative support, are delivered by Coast Guard people who have the trust of their seniors. Trust that each subordinate knows their job and will take the right action.

Quality products are delivered by Coast Guard people whose leaders have provided proper guidance: people with a clear understanding of both the expanse and limits of an individual's or team's range of actions.

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*"What is necessary to change a person is to change his awareness of himself."* --Abraham H. Maslow

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Quality products are delivered by Coast Guard people who have the confidence and capacity to make

--W. Edwards Deming

## **From The Top**

*Trust, understanding, confidence and self-esteem are essential if we are to commit to quality.*

**-RADM Paul Blayney**



sound operational and administrative decisions: confidence that comes with having the formula for success.

Finally, quality products are delivered by Coast Guard people who truly believe that they are the best people to provide the service or to do the job; people with high self-esteem.

Trust, understanding, confidence and self-esteem are essential if we are to commit to quality. Leaders and supervisors alone cannot deliver these traits. But, they can create an atmosphere where these values flourish — an empowering environment.

Supervisors at all levels must encourage subordinates to offer ideas and suggestions. They must take time to listen and then to take action.

They must fight for the resources necessary to do the job. They must make known their expectations about the timeliness and quality of the product. But then, they must stand aside and let those who do the work decide how it can best be done, and how the process can be improved. Supervisors must become coaches, cheerleaders, facilitators, and mentors. They should rarely have to be "the boss".

Are you empowered? Ask. Listen. Now really listen. ☺

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*"It's so hard when I have to, And so easy when I want to". --Sondra Anice Barnes.*

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# Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act

by LT Sanders Moody

District Legal Office

"In the past 16 years I have counseled hundreds of Coast Guard legal assistance clients. During that time this law (Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act) has clearly been the most misunderstood and misquoted," said CDR Walt Brawand, Legal Officer for the Second District.

"The very nature of military service often compromises the ability of servicemembers to fulfill their financial obligations and to assert many of their legal rights," said Brawand.

What the commander is referring to is how the SSCRA affects leases, debts and taxes of members in our service.

The SSCRA is a law written to assist members entering active duty where the change in income materially interferes with the members ability to meet pre-service financial obligations. It also provides some protection against dual taxation.

Here are some common questions and answers about the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act:

## Leases

**Q:** Can a service member who has just entered active duty get out of a lease or rental agreement?

**A:** Yes, if two conditions are met: First, the lease/rent agreement was signed before the service member entered active duty. Second, the leased premises have been occupied by the service member or dependents.

**Q:** How does a service member go about terminating a lease?

**A:** The service member must deliver written notice to the landlord after entering active duty or receiving active duty orders. If you intend to exercise this right, talk to your legal assistance attorney first.

**Q:** If a service member or dependent enters into a lease after entering active duty service, may he or she terminate under the provisions of SSCRA?

**A:** No, unless you have a termination clause in your lease, or there is a governing state statute containing a military clause. If you are about to enter into a lease agreement, try to include the following language:

*Lessor agrees that if the Lessee shall be transferred from (current duty station), the Lessee shall have the right to terminate the lease prior to the date of expiration, effective on the date of transfer. Written notice of termination shall be delivered to the Lessor at least 30 days prior to such transfer. Said notice to be sent to the Lessor by certified mail.*

## Debts

**Q:** Does the Act apply to time payments or installment contracts?

**A:** Service members who signed an installment contract for the purchase before entering active duty will be protected if their ability to make the payment is "materially affected" because of active duty service. If the act applies the member may be able to invoke the 6% interest cap.



## Remember

The service member must have paid, before entering into active duty, a deposit or installment payment under the contract.

If the service member is not able to make payments because of his or her military duty, the act applies.

The vendor is thereafter prohibited from rescinding or terminating the contract, unless authorized by a court order.

A court may determine whether a service member's financial condition is "materially affected" by comparing the service member's financial condition before and after entering active duty.

**Q:** Can I stop payments on my credit cards?

**A:** No. You are still responsible for your debts after entry on active duty. Your obligation to pay is unchanged by military service. You could however qualify for an interest rate reduction to 6%.

**Q:** Are there protections against mortgage foreclosures?

**A:** The Act protects service members against foreclosures of mortgages, deeds of trust, and similar security devices, provided the following conditions are met:

The relief is sought on an obligation secured by a mortgage, deed of trust, or similar security on either real or personal property;

The obligation originated prior to entry upon active duty;

The property was owned by the service member or dependent at the time relief is sought;

The ability to meet the financial obligation is 'materially affected' by the service member's active duty obligation."

## Taxation

For purposes of taxation of the active duty military member, the SSCRA provides that:

- No service member shall be deemed to have lost their legal residence or domicile solely by being absent from their home state in compliance with military orders.
- No service member shall be deemed to have become a resident or domiciliary of a "new" state, territory, possession, or district solely as a result of their presence there in compliance with military orders.
- The compensation for military service is not taxable income for services performed within a state, territory, possession, political subdivision or district unless the member is a legal resident or domiciliary there.
- Therefore, when a member is transferred to a new state, taxation of personal property, including motor vehicles, should not be imposed by the "new" state -- provided the member has paid all taxes required by the state where he or she is a resident or domiciliary.
- The SSCRA can be a complex law to understand and use. Please contact our office with any specific questions. ■

## Bridge Demolition



The Coraopolis Bridge near Pittsburgh falls into the Ohio River, March 1, making way for construction of a new bridge. MSO Pittsburgh enforced a half-mile safety zone during the demolition.

PA3 Frank Dunn

# Field Of Dreams

by PA3 Frank Dunn

Second District Public Affairs

**I**mages of managers and umpires nose to nose over home plate, the concentration of a pitcher praying for the third out and an outfielder's shoulder impacting the padded wall are, for some, the sights and sounds of Spring and the game of baseball.

For Roland Steibel, a Coast Guard claims examiner in the Second District's Legal Office, this was reality in January.

"I have always enjoyed baseball," he said. "Getting to meet and talk to former major league players and a chance to play in major league situations was a real high point in my life."

On January 16, Steibel was in St. Petersburg, Fla., for All Star Dream Week. Men from across the country over the age of 30 gathered at the St. Louis Cardinals Busch Training Complex for a week-long, baseball fantasy camp.

Steibel, who recently retired from active duty with the Coast Guard as a CWO4, said he had a memorable experience during a dinner buffet that first night.

"We all got acquainted and met some of the ex-major leaguers who were there," he said.

"Some of the coaches of the Dream Week teams were managers in the Cardinal's minor league system," he added.

According to Steibel, Monday morning, of Dream Week, was spent getting uniforms and making sure they fit. Then they hit the field for some hitting and pitching instruction.

## Let The Games Begin

"After the morning, we had a six-inning evaluation game. All the players of the six teams were mixed together.

The team managers watched their players to see how they were doing," he said. "Ex-major leaguer Curt Flood was my team's manager."

Tuesday, the fun started as the daily six-game schedule was kicked off with a game in the morning and one in the afternoon.

"On the Cardinal's team our basic defense was to have everybody under 50 in the outfield and everybody over in the infield," he said. "If you were big and nutty enough you played catcher."

"There was no base stealing allowed and they didn't call balks so there was no need to adjust your pitching technique," he said.

"The main idea was just to throw strikes," Steibel said. "They wanted people to hit the ball — You did not want your fielders going to sleep out there," he said.

"We were in real game situations," Steibel said. "They just didn't put the burden on the pitcher and catcher to hold a runner on base."

"Anytime base runners were on first or second I pitched from the stretch rather than going into a wind up, just for the experience for myself," he added. "I tried to go with what you would do in a real game."

He said, "The fielders had to do all the things that the pros do while playing the game. Other than an extended strike zone, the umpires did not cut us any slack."

"Not too many spectators came for the games except for the autograph hunters. I was even approached by a kid wanting an autograph, I said, 'you've got the wrong guy.' I didn't want to ruin a \$5 to 6 ball when he could have got an autograph that was worth something," he said.





Steibel, who was on the pitcher's mound most of the week, said, "I threw a lot of pitches without hurting myself. I pitched every day and played a couple innings at first base and one inning at second base."

### The Injury

"I injured myself warming up before the Thursday afternoon game," Steibel said. He said, "I thought maybe I could give our third baseman a break. I was

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*"Though I was only able to hit the ball with one hand, playing against ex-major leaguers, and even getting a lead-off base-hit against former Oakland A, Darrel Knowles...topped off the week"*

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warming up at third seeing how long and hard I could throw the ball. Not realizing the bases were 90 feet apart, I cranked up a couple of throws over to first, on the fly. I realized after doing that I popped or pulled something."

"I played as a designated hitter but by the end of the game I realized I shouldn't have even been doing that."

"The trainer there thought I tore or pulled my pectoral muscle. When I got home I went to the hospital. They thought I tore the rotator cuff.

I went to a specialist and he said that in fact I did tear the pectoral muscle from where it attaches to the rib cage." Steibel said.

He added, "I was purple from the elbow to the middle of my chest."

### Final Standings

Even though Steibel did not play in the playoff on Friday and his team finished 0-6 for the week, he had fun.

"Wearing the uniform and getting into regular baseball situations was exciting," he said.

"During the first-day evaluation game, we were ahead 3-2, I went out to the mound trying to protect a small lead. I pitched two innings of six up and six down and my teammates were saying 'hey that was some wicked stuff you're throwing.' That was the moment during the week I was most proud of." Steibel said.

On Saturday, all of the Dream Week teams arrived at Al Lang Stadium, where the Major League St. Louis Cardinals play their spring training games, for a bout with a collection of ex-major league players.

Each team played a three inning-game against the all stars and Steibel was not about to miss that. None fared well.

"Though I was only able to hit the ball with one hand, playing against ex-major leaguers and even getting a lead-off base-hit against former Oakland A, Darrel Knowles, plus having conversations with two of my favorite players, Bob Gibson and Steve Garvey, topped off the week," he said.

He added, "will I do it again next year? Yeah, if I win the lottery." ☑



*Left- Steible showed the opposing dream week team's batters his best stuff and even learned some new pitches from the pros.*

*Top - Looking sharp in his Cardinal red and whites, Steible strikes the Baseball Card pose.*

*Bottom - Steible pals around with some of his new found friends during Dream Week, such as ex-Los Angeles Dodgers great Steve Garvey. --All Star Dream Week Photos*

# Going Nuts

by PA2 Rob Raskiewicz

Second District Public Affairs

**W**hen you walk by Chief Yeoman Jesse Ogden's desk in the Second District's Travel office, you are overwhelmed by the variety of items he has collected over his 19 years of service. From the giant mounted Alaskan halibut tail to the bright yellow Hawaiian lei, the chief seemed to have all bases covered in the "unusual" category until he added to his collection three infant gray squirrels.

Late one evening after a storm shook the St. Louis-area, Ogden was jarred awake by a ringing phone.

"A friend of mine called and said there were two baby squirrels laying on the lawn and she didn't know what to do. She said they were laying on the ground in the debris shaking and crying."

"I told her to look for the mother squirrel and they'll take care of themselves. She called back a while later and said she didn't see the mother squirrel, but found another lying on the sidewalk. She sounded a bit shaken up so I told her that I'd take care of them until they were older and could take care of themselves," Ogden said.

"The following morning she brought them to me in a box filled with grass and a towel," the Ogden said. "When I first opened the lid and peered inside, I was instantly attached to the three little squirming balls of fur."

Without their mother, the babies might die. Ogden, who raised a baby squirrel as a pet growing up in rural Missouri, knew exactly what he needed to do.

"My first concern was feeding them. I went out and bought a pint of milk and a sports-type drink to feed the little beggars, I let the stuff warm up to room temperature, mixed equal parts of both and fed them with an eye dropper."

The chief feeds the babies whenever they start squeaking, which is roughly every two hours. As soon as they smell the loaded eye dropper, they reach up

with their little paws, grab on tight and slurp the stuff down.

"You would think that they never ate before," said Barbara Shaffer-Whitehead a nearby coworker, "But they are adorable."

"I'm going to need something bigger, they suck the eye dropper dry like that," Ogden said while snapping his fingers. "Usually, they act like I can't feed them fast enough."

During the day, the three squirrels live inside the chief's desk, in the bottom drawer.

"I put a few towels and some newspaper in there to keep them warm and they cuddled up in there," he said. The only problem I have is the smell. When you feed three babies so often, you can just imagine how much they relieve themselves."

When not at work with the chief, the three live in an oversized birdcage in Ogden's home in St. Louis, complete with sticks, grass and other "woosy" furnishings.

"For the most part, they are always in the cage," said Ogden, "But I do let them run a bit to get some exercise when I'm feeding them."

Once word of the three orphans spread, it wasn't long before the local news caught wind of it. All three St. Louis TV network affiliates and the local newspaper wanted to hear Ogden's squirrel story.

"It was really different," he said. "The last station spent over an hour doing the interview. I guess with the flood and all I didn't think this was very newsworthy."

"When my son Andy saw me on the evening news, he went crazy. When it



PA2 Rob Raskiewicz

YNC Jesse Ogden checks out one of three baby squirrels he is taking care of after they lost their mother.

was over he said he wanted to be a hero like his dad when he grows up. I don't need to tell anyone how great that makes a parent feel," he said with a smile.

Chief Ogden isn't the only one excited about the squirrels. The district's operations center controller received numerous calls after the story aired.

"I had no idea what was going on," said Boatswain's Mate Chief William Boley, the controller on duty that night. "The phone started ringing and it never stopped — I must have gotten 50 calls about those damn squirrels."

"I guess the best part about the whole affair is Andy, he thinks they're about the greatest," Ogden said.

The three squirrels are now part of Ogden's life, and have earned names.

"Rocky" is the biggest, "Tiny" is the smallest and "Ron" was named in honor of my captain, CAPT Ronald Hindman, Chief of Personnel, Second District staff," Ogden said.

"I figure in about three months they should be big enough to start giving them their freedom back," he said. "I plan to move their house outside and gradually wean them off my dependence. I'll tell you what though, Andy and I are going to hate to see them go." ■

# Second District Work-Life News

1-800-USCGWLS (EXT D02) 314-539-2675

June 1994

## Second District Work-Life Staff

### Supervisor, Work-Life Staff

LCDR Gary Massey

### Social Services Assistant

Lisa Garcia Fensterman

### Family Programs Administrator

Rich Curtis

### Relocation Assistance Manager

CWO2 Kim Mosby

### Health Education Specialist

HSC Jim Romp

### Career Information Specialist

RDC Charles Martinez

### Wellness Coordinator

Elisa Mullins

### Dependent Resource Coordinator

JoAnn Tindall

### Employee Assistance Coordinator

John Yunker

### District Chaplain

LT Elizabeth Lizarraga

### District Ombudsman

Linnea Johnson

### Administrative Support

YN2 Jerry Ferman

### Important Phone Numbers

Coast Guard Health Benefits 1-800-942-2422

Maschoff, Barr & Associates 1-800-523-5668

Military Civil Rights Coordinator/Facilitator (314)-539-2675

## WORK-LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

By Gary A. Massey, Work-Life Supervisor

**O**ne aspect of the Work-Life program is the relationship between Work-Life and leadership responsibilities.

In most cases, supervisors are the first to become aware that a shipmate or employee has a personal problem or need. The sooner a problem is addressed the easier the solution.

As a supervisor, or even just a shipmate or co-worker, take an interest in others problems - professional or personal. If the problem can be solved within the chain of command, use it. If you need help from our Work-Life staff call us.

Every supervisor should get involved and make themselves aware of the services and benefits offered under the Work-Life program. Not just for their own personal use but, for the benefit of their shipmates and those they supervise. The Work-Life program is a real aid to supervisors in that it provides answers and resources they may not have readily available.

Work-Life does not relieve supervisors of their responsibilities to the people that work for them. Work-Life is not a place to "hand off" a worker's personal problems. If you've ever worked for someone who didn't take a personal interest in

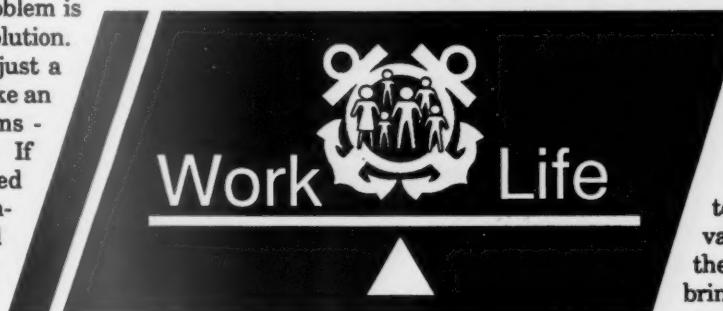
your needs, I'm sure you sensed and resented it. Supervisors should take an interest and follow through -- check back to insure the problem is being addressed. The message supervisors should be sending is "I Care."

Again, if the problem can be solved within the chain of command, use it. If the problem is an extremely personal one,

or you don't feel comfortable using the chain of command, call Work-Life directly or the Coast Guard's contract EAP provider, Maschoff & Barr.

The addition of Work-Life to performance evaluations validates the importance of the Work-Life program and brings into sharp focus that this program is not just a program for dependents -- it's a program everyone needs to be familiar with.

The Work-Life program provides a long-needed resource to members and supervisors. Since part of good leadership is taking care of your people, the training and education provided by our staff is, in reality, Leadership Training. The key is for supervisors to keep abreast of the services offered by the program and to actively pursue help when needed. The goal is to take care of our people -- they are worth it!



# Achieving Your

By Richard Curtis, Family Programs Administrator

Only 5-10% of all marriages are functioning at a really high level of mutual satisfaction. That means that 90% of all married couples are living well below their level of relationship potential. Most couples go through married life with a mere fraction of their capacity for love and companionship either realized or expressed. Many couples have tried to be companions in marriage and have ended up being adversaries. The following ideas were presented by Dr. David R. Mace in his many books and articles on marriage enrichment. Note the listing at the end of this article for titles and publishers.

**MARRIAGE:** Companionship marriage is a "socially registered commitment between a man and woman, in which they seek to know themselves and each other as far as they are capable of being known. Through mutual affection and affirmation, they help each other to grow and change in order to become the loving and creative persons they are capable of becoming."

There are three essential components of a couple's primary coping system: commitment to growth and change; effective communication system and creative use of anger and conflict.

Commitment to growth and change involves a clear commitment to each other that each intends to work for ongoing growth in the relationship. Changing one's behavior in marriage requires an investment of energy and effort which may involve some discomfort and even pain. All the information in the world, however, is completely useless until the couple together has the courage to act on it.

**CONFLICT:** Differences in marriage are unavoidable. Differences lead to disagreement, and they in turn sometimes lead to conflict. Conflict is an integral part of a healthy marriage relationship. Indeed, conflict provides the essential information the couple needs for the growth of their mar-

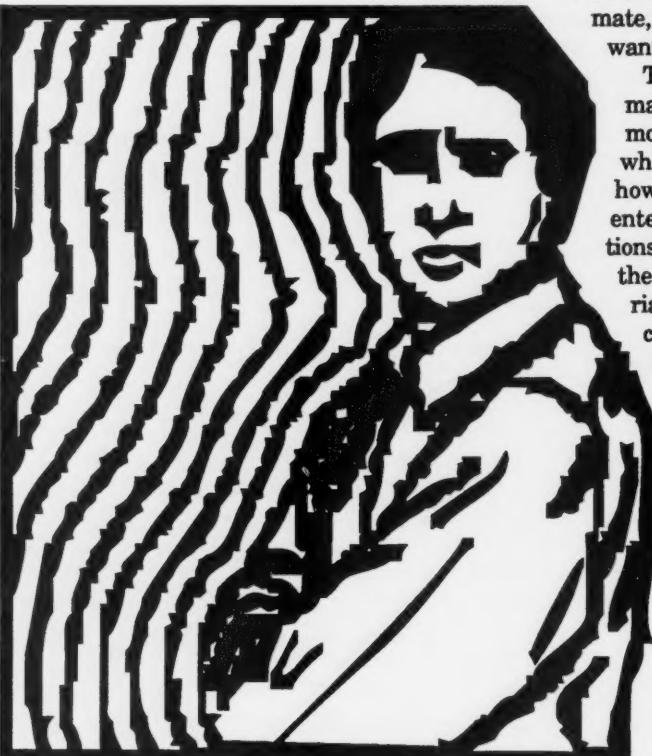
riage. If they suppress conflict, they deny themselves the chance to deepen their relationship. It is our conflicts which clearly identify for us the vital adjustments we must make if our marriages are to become the intimate, loving trusting relationships we want them to be.

The difference between a bad marriage and a good one is based, more than on any other factor, on whether or not the couple learn how to resolve their differences and enter into a close and intimate relationship. Learning this process opens the door to a companionship marriage. Any couple who can deal constructively with interpersonal conflict in their relationship can move on to continuing growth and enrichment.

**ANGER:** For most people, the state of marriage generates more anger than they are likely to experience in any other relationship. Many marriages fail because the quest for love and intimacy leads to a series of frustrating experiences which produce so much anger that the love is destroyed, and the quest is finally abandoned. Anger is not of itself wrong, but only causes

trouble and distress when it is misunderstood and misused. Anger is a natural, healthy, emotional state and should be accepted as such. What's important in the success or failure of a marriage is how the couple deals with it. Unless anger can be processed as a raw material for the development of intimacy, the possibility of closeness in the relationship is denied. You are not "wrong" for being angry, but you are responsible for what you do with your anger.

Couples who vent their anger on each other tend, over time, to step up the vigor of their vocal attacks to the point where they cease to be effective and sometimes they spill over into the use of physical violence. Conversely, those who suppress their anger eventually lose their capacity for emotional warmth and tenderness—they shut each other out through psychological withdrawal and limit their areas of interaction to those that can be handled safely. They settle for a



# Marriage Potential

superficial relationship and give up hope of loving intimacy.

Anger is an ally—it draws attention to those areas of the relationship where the two personalities do not "fit"—calling for new adjustments in order to maintain and deepen their intimacy. Every angry situation is an opportunity for growth in a relationship.

Spouses need to (1) promise to communicate their anger and ask for help in resolving it; (2) refrain from attacking each other. (Attacks are entirely inappropriate between people seeking to establish a loving relationship); and (3) own and work through the issues that caused the anger. (Each spouse has an equal responsibility to clear it up.)

**THE LOVE-ANGERCYCLE** (a vicious cycle in which intimacy leads to the realization of differences in the relationship, to disagreements, to frustration, to anger, to conflict, to distancing, and finally to renewed need for closeness and intimacy) repeats itself over and over in all close relationships. Some couples have broken their enslavement to the cycle through a combination of marriage enrichment experiences, skills training, and an ongoing support group.

**NEGOTIATION:** The art of conflict resolution is not simple. The anger must be taken out of the conflict before it can be resolved effectively. One must take time to cool down and stay cool by using "I" messages ("I feel..." rather than "You are..." or worse, "You always..."). The couple must clearly understand the true nature of the conflict. They should define the disagreement by preparing separate statements in which each puts the other's point of view in writing. Then the couple can exchange and modify these statements.

A mutually acceptable settlement of the underlying disagreement must be negotiated. Separately list all available options in writing, and then come together and choose the option on which both can reach maximum agreement. Generally, couples share a choice of capitulation, compromise, or

coexistence.. Caring capitulation is NOT surrender to an opponent's coercion, but rather it is a gift of love, freely given. In the long term, this must be a two-way process. Compromise involves bargaining, making concessions, trying to find a middle position in which both surrender something and both gain something. If after full exploration no way emerges in which either party can yield, then both agree to peaceful coexistence. This state of affairs (of unresolved disagreements) should be accepted only after each party has made an honest and sincere effort to accommodate the other. It is like a truce which allows time for further investigation so that the conflict can be reexamined later and hopefully settled by capitulation or compromise.

**HOW TO BEGIN:** Get together every day for 20 minutes of uninterrupted sharing of feelings. Make time to work through every issue that brings any kind of tension into the relationship. Join a couples' support group. Contact the Coast Guard's Employee Assistance Contractor, Maschoff & Barr if you need additional counseling or contact me for additional



information.

**Selected Books by David R. Mace**

*How To Have a Happy Marriage*, Abingdon Press, 1977

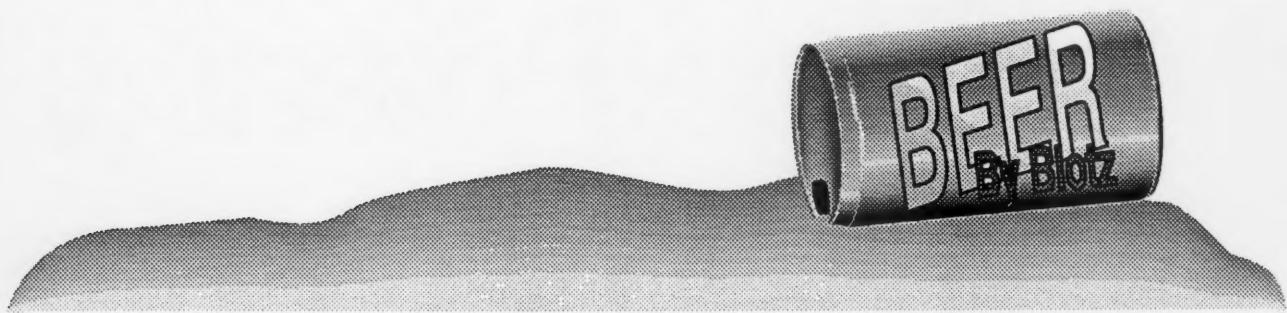
*Love and Anger in Marriage*, The Zondervan Corporation,

1982

*Close Companions*, The Continuum Publishing Company,

1984





# Some Sobering Facts About Alcohol

*Reprinted from Boating Pamphlet*

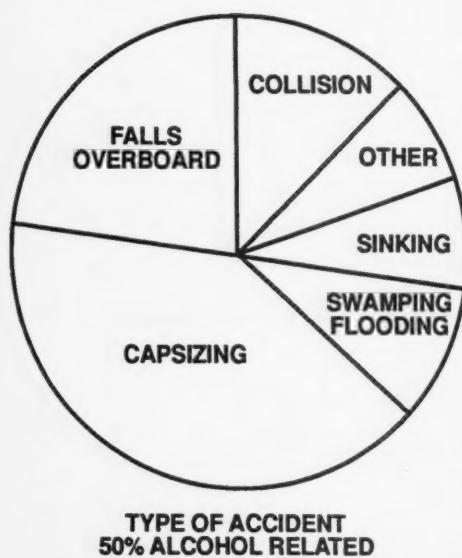
**O**ver 800 people die in boating accidents every year. Nine out of ten of them drown. About half those deaths involve alcohol. It's a tragic fact and not a joke, but 50% of drunk men who drown have their fly unzipped. Enough said?

Four hours of exposure to powerboat noise, vibrations, sun, glare, wind and motion produces a kind of "boater's hypnosis". This slows reactions almost as much as being legally

drunk. Adding alcohol to this sun exposure intensifies the effects. As the chart shows, sometimes just a couple of beers are too many.

When you're "tipsy", you're much more likely to fall overboard. Alcohol also reduces your body's ability to protect against cold water. So within minutes you may not be able to call for help, or swim to safety. A drunk person whose head is immersed can be confused and swim down to death instead of up to safety. ■

**BOATING FATALITIES**



**Blood Alcohol Content Chart**

| Body Weight<br>in Pounds | Number of drinks in a two hour period.<br>12 oz. beer = 5 oz. wine = 1 oz. 80 proof liquor. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|                          | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 100                      | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 120                      | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 140                      | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 160                      | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 180                      | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 200                      | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 220                      | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 240                      | 1   | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |

BAC to .05%

**BE CAREFUL** - Loss of judgment and coordination

BAC .05%  
to .10%

**ABILITIES IMPAIRED** - Chance of accident  
increased

BAC .10%  
and over

**DO NOT OPERATE A BOAT** - High risk of accident

# 1-900-RIP-U-OFF

## *900 Callers Beware!*

By Lisa Garcia-Fensterman, Social Service Assistant

You've seen the ads "You've won!! To claim your prize just call 900..." or "To get the latest update on...call 900..."

The 900 number is a relatively recent entry into the field of telemarketing and unlike 800 numbers, the 900 numbers involve charges. "900" numbers may be used for accessing telephone "services" such as "Dial a Joke", sports scores, soap opera updates, etc. By dialing one of these numbers you can: order goods, talk to Santa, join a group discussion, get financial tips, and more. To do these things you may pay a flat fee or pay by the minute.

If you know exactly what you are getting and how much it'll cost, the 900 number may be a perfectly good way to get information. However, in some cases consumers have found that they have been charged excessively or have not received the services or products promised. Also, the structure of the 900 fee may allow for larger fees to accrue during a call.

**WHAT TO WATCH FOR IN 900 NUMBERS:** Long distance 900 numbers as well as other promotional long distance exchanges are used in many ways. Your best protection against problems is to look out for:

- Failure to disclose costs up front - don't call the 900 number without first knowing what it will cost!
- Some 900 numbers disclose the costs per minute, but don't say that in order to get the information you want you must listen for many minutes.
- Numbers that entice you to call with a promise of "free" job or housing information. Once you call, and pay for the call, you are told that the job is taken or the house is not available. Other scams use a pitch that reveals the cost of the call but not hidden service charges and fees for the service; you only find these out after you call and are charged.

□ Some numbers target children and teens advertising "free" gifts or stories. "Talklines" are particularly popular among teenagers at a cost-per-minute charge.

### WHAT TO DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF:

- Deal only with reputable companies. With well-known organizations or companies the costs are usually stated up front with a maximum for cost-per-minute calls or a clearly stated flat fee.
- Think twice before calling the 900 number for any "free" gift. You are paying for these gifts when you make the call!
- Don't confuse 900 numbers with the toll-free 800 numbers.
- Talk to your children about use of these numbers.
- Check your phone bill carefully for any 900 charges and verify their accuracy. This is a largely unregulated industry - anyone can start a 900 number business.

If you have problems with charges on your bill for 900 numbers write your phone company immediately. You can ask the company to delete the charge, though they are not legally obligated to do so. You normally cannot be disconnected for failure to pay a disputed 900 number charge. You can also get the name of a 900 number company from the phone company and write to them to ask them to delete the charges. Check with your local phone company to see if you can have them "block out" these numbers making them impossible to call from your home. This service is available in some states. Finally, if you feel you have been the victim of a 900 number scam, you may want to contact your state consumer protection office or the Federal Trade Commission.

# Our Last Good-Byes

By HSC Jim Romp, Health Education Specialist

This is the last article that I will write for the Second Coast Guard District's Work-Life Newsletter. On Aug. 4 I begin 57 days "Terminal Leave" (I know, we're not supposed to use that term), I will officially retire from the US Coast Guard on Oct. 1 after 24 years of military service.

My replacement has already been ordered in for the end of June, early July. He is HSC Mike Wright. Chief Wright is transferring in from CG AIR STATION BARBERS POINT, HI. I hope that you will all take the time to welcome Chief

Wright and his wife and daughter into the Second District.

I hope I have served your needs and have been of help to you in the Second District with your concerns about CHAMPUS, Dependent's Dental Plan (DDP) and other medical questions. I have enjoyed my time here in St. Louis, MO.

I will be retiring to Raleigh, NC where I have been accepted into college for my nursing degree and to be with my parents and family after too long of a separation from them. I bid you all farewell and hope that your careers and family keep the faith. ■

# Crayons Recalled

(Reprinted by permission from ST. LOUIS PARENT)

Although crayons are not meant to be eaten, the reality is that every child, at one time or another, has stuck one in his mouth. While parents may not be thrilled with this idea, it seemed fairly harmless—until recently.

The United States government has recalled thousands of crayons because they contain levels of lead that could poison children.

## Choosing Safe Crayons

To ensure your child's art materials are safe, you should look for products that carry a label of ASTM D-4236. These products have been tested by a toxicologist who has determined they are not a chronic hazard.

Crayola Crayons have been confirmed to be safe for children. Most of the crayons in question were manufactured in China and imported before 1990.

## Banned Brands

The following is a list of crayon brands that have been recalled because they contain lead. The first three contain enough lead to present a lead poisoning hazard to young children who might chew on or eat the crayons.

The other eight brands do not contain enough lead to increase the blood level above the threshold level for lead poisoning.

• "12 JUMBO CRAYONS" Concord Enterprises, Los Angeles, CA

• "Safe 48 non-Toxic I'm a Toys R Us Kid! Crayons," Toys R Us, Paramus NJ

• "12 Crayons, Glory" and "18 Crayons That Point", Glory Stationery Manufacturing Company Limited, Los Angeles, CA

• "64 Crayons, School Quality", No. 8064, A.J. Cohen Distributors

## Hauppauge, NY

• "64 Crayons" #CR 64-64 CT, Baum Imports, NY, NY

• "12 Super Jumbo Crayons", Dynamic Division of Agora International, St. Albans, NY

• "Crayons, No. 5" CL 850, Dynamic Division of Agora International, St. Albans, NY

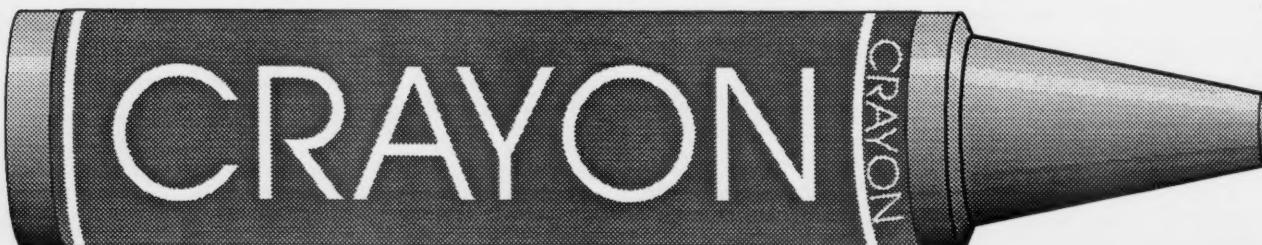
• "Fun Time 72 Crayons", NO. B541, Overseas United, NY, NY

• "64 Crayons Kidz Biz", Bargain Wholesale, Los Angeles

• "64 Crayons SKU #51-02600," Universal International, MN, MN

• "Feido, 12 Crayons", NO CC 8812, Kipp Brothers Inc., Indianapolis, IN

The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends taking the crayons away from children and discarding them or taking them back to the store for a refund. ■



# What Is The CPO Academy All About?

By RDC Charles Martinez, Career Information Specialist

**A**s a recent graduate of the Chief Petty Officer (CPO) Academy, I would like to share my thoughts, experiences, and try to dispel some myths you may have regarding the CPO Academy. The CPO Academy is described in COMDTINST 1500.15D as the Coast Guard's premier leadership and management school. Application procedures are contained in the instruction. Rather than tell you what is contained in the instruction I will share my experience of the CPO Academy.

The CPO Academy does not attempt to train you to be a chief. However, it will expose you to some of the tools necessary to meet the challenge of today's Coast Guard CPO. You can obtain the skills necessary to effectively carry out the managerial, administrative, and personnel counseling responsibilities of a CPO.

The guest speakers provide presentations on a wide range of timely and beneficial topics and there's also a wellness program which may consist of team walks, biking, step aerobics, or other healthful activities. But do not panic, you won't be required to run or jog.

I learned to improve myself. By learning about myself, my traits, and my goals I was better able to understand what I was made of. Each member of the class received a Meyers-Briggs Personality Profile. Based on the results, I could better understand why I act the way I do. The Academy's curriculum contains a series on Increasing Human Effectiveness. I learned and practiced TQM techniques. Although, I had been exposed and participated in meetings using TQM, I never understood the process. At the Academy, you are put in situations where you have to work hard using the TQM techniques and produce results. Getting eight chiefs in a room and coming to a consensus in 10 minutes is a challenge.

Many other topics such as DANES, VA Benefits, SBP, Legislative Affairs, CHAMPUS and many others were also presented.

I hope I dispelled some myths for you. I encourage all Chiefs, Senior Chiefs, and Master Chiefs who have not attended the CPO Academy to submit their package.

Contact me or talk to another graduate for more information. ■

# Fit-For-Life

By Elisa Mullins, Wellness Coordinator

**G**reat news for those of you that could care less about how fast your 10K time is...gardening can be just as good for your heart as low impact aerobics or riding a stationary bike, and maybe better yet for your soul! Gardening is a great way to keep in shape: all that bending, reaching, and pulling helps maintain flexibility and works the muscles. Experts currently recommend 30 minutes a day of exercise or activity. Studies have shown that the type or intensity of the activity isn't as important; it is the total minutes that count. Granted, there is a big difference in the amount of work performed if you are watering the lawn or tilling the garden, so perhaps not everyone is working hard enough to be considered maximally fit, but any activity is better than sitting in front of the TV! Obviously, if you want to run races, you must train to do so; but, if you simply want to live longer and reduce your risk of heart disease, gardening is a great tool.

If you are interested in weight loss, you may need to add a walking program along with it, but all that pushing, pulling,



and digging burns about 300 calories per hour! You can also think of those garden tools as barbells: raking will work the biceps, triceps, deltoids and latissimus dorsi (arms, back and shoulders), while digging works the gluteus maximus and quadriceps (buttocks and thighs).

As with any exercise, start slowly to avoid aches, pains and injuries. Backs are under special strain with gardening so keep your back flexible by lying on your back and holding your knees to your chest for a count to 30. The best way to strengthen your back is by strengthening the abdominal muscles with crunches: lie on your back with knees bent and feet on the floor, and slowly curl up your head, neck and shoulders. Bending the knees too much can also cause cartilage damage and stress the ligaments, so kneel or sit rather than crouching for long periods.

Perhaps the best thing about gardening is its positive effect on mental health. Exercise doesn't need to be intense to get the great stress-reducing benefits, so if you are a gardener, you should feel great about your "sport"! ■

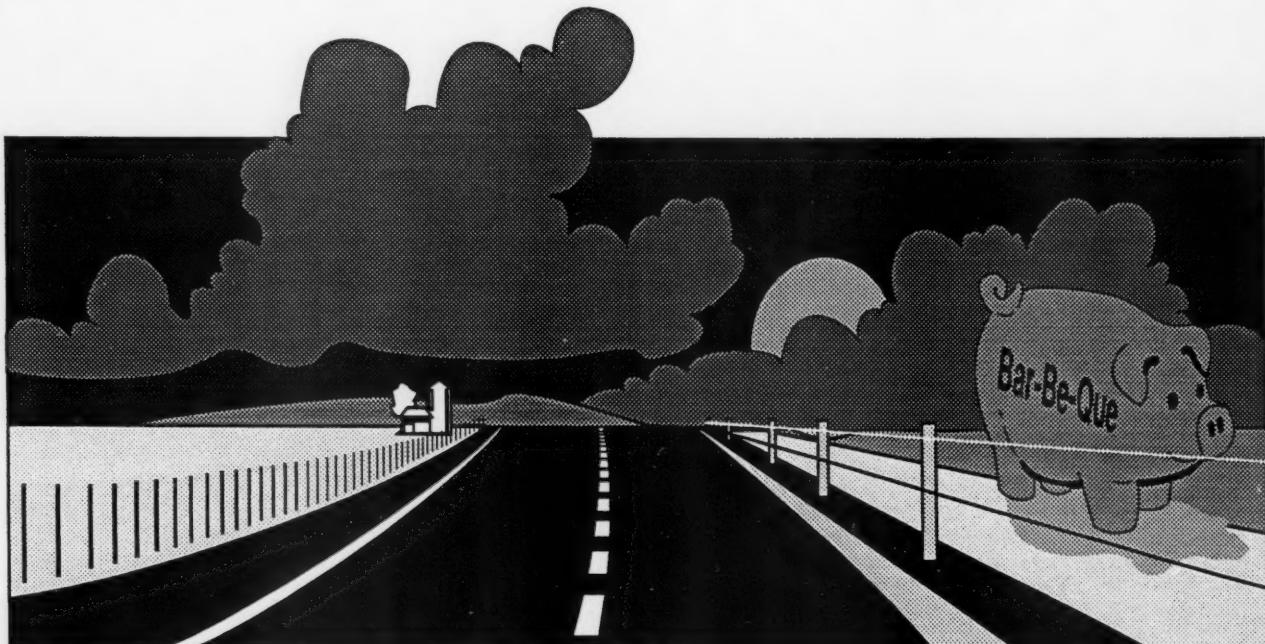
# ON THE ROAD WITH WORK-LIFE

By CWO2 Kim Mosby, Relocation Assistance Manager

**A**s insight to the rest of the District, in each issue of the newsletter, I will be listing a great place to eat on the road in the Second District. If you have a great place to eat in your community let us know so we can check it out next time we are in your area.

Last month we visited the CGC CHIPPEWA in Owensboro KY, and no trip to Owensboro is complete without a trip to the MOONLITE BAR-B-QUE, located at 2840 W. Parrish just inside the bypass. The Moonlite is a Kentucky tradition with a complete Bar-B-Q menu including a Kentucky specialty mutton. The best deal is the \$8.95 all you

can eat buffet. The table stretches forever, and includes a dessert bar. They have a salad bar but I never got there. I dug right into the main course which includes ribs, chicken, mutton, pork, and ham. Don't forget the corn bread, it will melt in your mouth. Try to save room for the dessert bar which includes cheesecake, hot cobblers, ice cream and assorted cakes. If you catch the right day they have a real banana pudding made with vanilla wafers, a Midwest tradition. Arrive early and stay late. I give the Moonlite a four pig rating for quantity alone, the quality is great also. 



# PCS Entitlements Are Now Taxable

By CWO2 Kim Mosby, Relocation Assistance Manager

A recent IRS ruling and change in tax laws now requires members to pay taxes on PCS entitlements starting with the 1994 tax year. Members transferring in 1994 will be required to pay taxes on their DLA, TLA, TLE, and per diem received. At the same time certain moving expenses are no longer tax deductible. The DOD and Coast Guard are working with Congress to find a solution to this added tax burden. PPC is working on a way to withhold the money in advance, but in the interim members should hold money aside to cover the tax at the end of the year or they may file an IRS form 1040ES and pay the taxes each quarter. Members with questions should contact their tax advisor or the district legal office. ■



# Help For Managing Change

by John C. Yunker, EAP Coordinator

**C**HANGE....it's everywhere, it's everywhere, it's everywhere.

Many of today's workers are experiencing STRESS in adapting to changes taking place around them (and not only in the workplace). As the workplace restructures and "do more with less"...."work smarter not harder"....workers are experiencing new stresses that perhaps did not exist in the past. Management practices like Total Quality Management (TQM) can even add more changes. Downsizing, right sizing, streamlining, RIF's, and other cost-cutting efforts have left many of us concerned.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) has broadened to include a wide array of skills and services to meet the mental and emotional health needs of an increasingly stressed workforce.

Sometimes Coast Guard members (even family members) do not seek assistance even though they may be experiencing stress (anger, marital problems, financial problems, depression, relationship problems, etc.). For instance, if you had a medical or dental problem, would you not hesitate to seek help? So, isn't your mental health as worthy of your attention as your physical health?

One gauge of an employee's mental and emotional health is his/her ability to adapt to change. Workers who manage

their reactions to change and challenges of work maintain healthier, balanced perspectives, reduce "down-time", and contribute more to the organization.

Attitude toward change is very important. A study of workers' attitudes toward change revealed three significant qualities among workers who thrived during change (Kobasa AT&T study):

1. The employees felt they had control over their lives.
2. The employees saw the change as a challenge—not an obstacle.
3. The employees had a commitment to life outside work—family, personal growth, hobbies, volunteering, etc.

Such attitudes allowed these kinds of workers somewhere to recuperate and refresh themselves when they needed a "Re Charge" from the pressures of work.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help you manage CHANGE. The EAP resources are here to help you address personal problems before the problems impact the workplace (or at home). The EAP program is for active duty Coast Guard members, civilian employees, and their family members. The program is staffed by professionals who uphold strict confidentiality.

If you need the EAP program...call the toll-free number 1-800-523-5668, or contact me, your Second District Employee Assistance Program Coordinator. ■

# Retirement/Separation/Transition

By RDC Charles Martinez, Career Information Specialist

**A**fter 20-plus years of service in the U.S. Coast Guard, or any of the other Armed Services,



retirement from military service is something many of us look forward to with an eye to the future. Retirement should be enjoyed to the fullest as life should be.

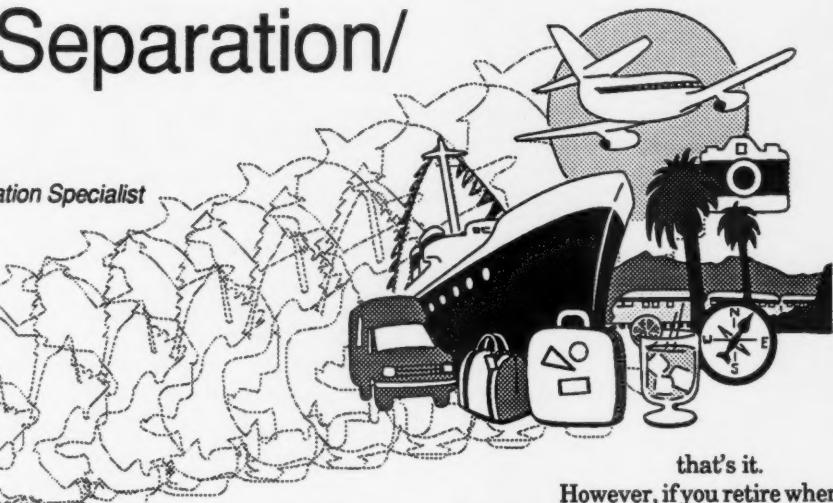
Twenty years can be a long time. This is especially true if you're on the far side of 20. One day rolls into the next, and before you know it 5, 10, 15, and 20 years have rolled by. I'm sure you've heard the saying, "My how time flies." It's true.

Out of the myriad of job opportunities out there I know of no business, and few government jobs, which offer a twenty-year retirement plan. So an opportunity to retire after 20-years isn't such a bad deal.

There are a number of people who have submitted their letters requesting retirement. "Congratulations!" if your request has been approved. You have reached a major milestone in your life.

For those of you who have approved retirement requests, you will be receiving a retirement package in the mail. Let me quickly add that this package contains a number of very important documents.

Read these documents carefully, complete them accurately, and return them as directed. Please see your unit's Administration/Personnel Office for help



that's it.

in filling out

these forms. If you fail to return your package, return the package without all the required forms, or return it with the forms filled out incorrectly, this could cause your retirement pay to be late and/or incorrect. Or if you fail to submit these documents within the allotted time frame, the same may result.

I say this not to alarm you, but to remind you to be careful. Again, if you need help, please contact your Admin Office for assistance. For those of you who have elected less than full participation in the Survivor's Benefit Plan (SBP), your spouse must concur with your election or elect a greater amount. This form must be returned to the CG Personnel & Pay Center (PPC) Topeka no later than 30-days prior to your retirement. If this form and/or the SBP notification letter to your spouse (depending upon your election) isn't received by PPC by this date, it will affect your retirement pay. You will automatically be enrolled at full participation.

Finally, few people actually retire from military service. Most go on to pursue other goals in their life. Those of us in the career counselling business like to think of retirement after 20-plus years of military service as a transition period. Why? Because in the civilian sector "retirement" means you don't plan on working again. Once you retire,

However, if you retire when you're 38 or 44 years old, most likely you will be off pursuing another career. And since people are living longer, fuller lives these days, they're finding plenty of things to do to occupy their time. Most people I know already have jobs and different careers lined up prior to their retirement from the Coast Guard.

Transition statistics show that most people transitioning from the military will change jobs at least three times in the first five years.

One recommendation I have if you plan to transition to a new career, is to attend a transition assistance program (even if you already have a job lined up). The DOD holds transition assistance programs regularly due to the military drawdown.

The Coast Guard career information program is also developing a transition assistance program. The transition assistance program will assist you in resume writing, interviewing techniques, and job market analysis in addition to going over the important veterans benefits that you are entitled to.

I highly recommend that you contact me, your career information specialist to get information on this type of program which can assist you with making a successful career transition. If you are separating from the service contact me so I can schedule you for a transition seminar. Good luck in your new career. Contact CPO Charles Martinez for further information (314) 539-2675. ■

# CAMP FEARBEGONE

## Sending Your Child To Summer Camp

### *How To Allay The Fears And Build The Excitement*

REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF 1989 PARLAY INTERNATIONAL

Joann Tindall, Dependent Resource Coordinator

**S**ummer camp can be an exciting and scary time for your youngster — here are some thoughts on how you can help your child get the most out of the experience.

When you first talk about camp, probably in wintertime, summer seems like years away. All of the activities sound like more fun than trudging through snow or being in school. But as time for camp nears, anxieties may rise to meet the excitement of this new adventure. You can help your child keep "fun" in the spotlight and overcome those anxieties.

- Have your child help with the preparations by picking out the clothes and buying the supplies. This will help your child realize that this whole experience is designed for him or her to have fun and that the child has some say over what happens.
- When packing, include some things your child can use to create some personal, "homey" space in the cabin. Perhaps you can have a family picture blown up into a poster to put on the wall, and send along stuffed animals. (Remember during this selection process that some of the items which go to camp will not be coming back. So, maybe some favorite clothes and knickknacks should be left behind.)
- Plan to make a treat together, like sugarless hard candies. They will keep well and each time your child has one she or he can think of home. The candy can also be shared with cabinmates.
- During this preparation time, talk about feelings. Reassure your child you will miss him or her and that it's normal and that homesickness is common. Encourage the child to talk about the things that cause anxiety and each time remind the child of all of the fun things that can be done at camp.
- Get some input from other parents about their experiences with summer camp. This will help you identify and alleviate some of your child's concerns.
- Arrange for your child to talk with some peers who have gone to camp and to answer questions.
- Finally, send a care package several days before the child leaves. Your child will feel much better when she or he has been remembered on that first mail call. ■

## Ombudsmen Take The Spotlight

*Linnea Johnson, Ombudsman for the Second District Office, receives a Letter Of Appreciation, March 26, from LCDR Gary Massey District Work-Life Supervisor. March 26 was Ombudsman Appreciation Day throughout the Coast Guard. Johnson has served as Ombudsman for the Second District Office for the past year.*



PA2 Rob Raskiewicz



## *St. Louis Units Pace The Park*

*Left -- YN1 Rick Robenstine runs through Forest Park in St. Louis during the Second District Office's Semi-Annual Forest Park Walk-Run.*

*Below -- Walkers and runners start the 6.2 mile course that will take them around Forest Park. -Photos by PA2 W. Scott Epperson*



# Survivor Of The Leopold

## *Retiree Tells Of WWII Coast Guard Experience*

by PA2 W. Scott Epperson

Second District Public Affairs

**J**ust after dusk on the evening of March 9, 1944, the Coast Guard-manned Destroyer Escort USS *Leopold* broke from its convoy transiting the icy North Atlantic waters just south of Iceland, to pursue a suspicious radar contact in the distance.

Firing a flare for illumination, the crew of the *Leopold* spotted a German U-boat that had begun to submerge and started firing at it. Without warning, the deck of the *Leopold* shook under the fierce impact of a torpedo fired by a second U-boat that had been waiting to close the trap the *Leopold* had sailed into. The *Leopold* was torn apart, throwing most of its crew into the frigid waters and taking the rest down as it sank. Of 199 aboard, only 28 survived to tell the story.

Today, 50 years later, the memories of that fateful day, and the war years preceding it, are still vivid in the mind of one of those survivors, Richard R. Novotny.

### *Joining The Coast Guard: a patriotic act*

Novotny joined the Coast Guard in the summer of 1942 at the age of 21, after two-and-a-half years at the University of Illinois.

"I was taking care of my dad's 36-foot Burger at the Columbia Yacht club in Chicago, when I saw this fellow standing on the dock in a uniform that I didn't recognize," Novotny said.

"He watched me maneuver the boat, take it off a buoy, bring it up to the dock, and jump out and lash it up.

"When he approached me he said 'The Coast Guard is looking for guys like you, how do you stand in the draft?' I told him they were breathing down my neck."

The man, a Chief, told Novotny of the Coast Guard and its operations on the rivers and overseas.

The next thing he knew, Novotny, his fiancee and his parents were in the Burger headed down the Illinois River so both Novotny and the yacht could join the Coast Guard.

Novotny's father, like many boat owners at the time, had loaned the yacht to the Coast Guard so they could use it, and others like it, as patrol boats on the rivers.

"We brought the boat down to St. Louis from Chicago and tied it up at the Mound City Boat Yard."

Then, he simply "walked up the hill" to the Coast Guard offices in downtown St. Louis, filled out some forms and said "I do." With that, Novotny was in the Coast Guard. "It was that easy."

Novotny said good-by to his parents and fiancee, who took a train back to Chicago, and returned to his boat.

"From there I was instructed to take the yacht up to Portage Des Sioux, Mo. No boot camp, no seabag, I just had orders."

### *Security Patrols: guarding the rivers*

During World War II the Second District Commander, then known as the District Coast Guard Officer, had been tasked with the movement of landing craft and other Navy boats from shipyards throughout the Midwest, down the rivers to New Orleans. For



PA2 W. Scott Epperson

Richard Novotny at his home in Pompano Beach, Florida



Courtesy of Richard Novotny

Novotny at age 23, Photo taken in Cincinnati in 1943.

security reasons the Coast Guard set up anti-sabotage units to protect bridges, locks and dams, and the shipyards from any possible threat.

Generally, there were four men to a boat, conducting patrols for suspicious activity or floating objects around the dams and bridges.

At Portage Des Sioux, the Coast Guard leased a marina for the reserve crafts that were donated and operated on the Missouri, Upper Mississippi, and Illinois rivers in the St. Louis area.

"Up at Portage, we did a couple of patrols before we even got the paint and supplies," Novotny added that later, the only color they got was GI gray, and they painted it right over the mahogany varnish on the boat.

From Portage, Novotny and others conducted security patrols on the Upper Mississippi River from south of St. Louis Harbor up to Grafton, Ill. However, their main task was to protect Lock and Dam 26 in Alton.

By the end of the first month of patrols, Novotny still hadn't received a Coast Guard uniform. By the time he did, the slacks he had worn on his trip from Chicago were shorts.

"One time there was something wrong with my boat so the crew shifted to a 30-foot 1940 Owens. We were already on the top of the dam, on the last watch, when we

saw a suspicious looking object going toward the dam.

"We unashed and dashed over. About the time we got to the object, and pretty close to going over the dam, the engines started to sputter around. We almost went over the damn dam with damn engine failure.

"It turned out to be dirty gasoline, but we got the object. It was a small beer pony. From a distance you couldn't tell what it was."

### Rifle and Pistol Training: a cold necessity

During their time in Portage, boat crews were alternately sent to St. Charles, Mo., where the Coast Guard conducted 10-day training sessions on .38-caliber pistols and the 30mm guns that were placed on the reserve craft operating in the area.

"This was in October, and the slats on the exterior walls just slowed the breeze down as it flowed through."

While they were training they were getting snow and rain, and the cold made it even worse. The facility they trained in was mostly mud, and they spent most of their time in it.

### Back To Portage: ice and the end of patrol season

During the winter months, when the river iced over, patrols were suspended at Portage and the crews were transferred elsewhere till the river was navigable again.

"After rifle training we came back to our vessels and continued the usual patrol routine, relieving other crews, and then along came December 15, 1942.

"We were coming up from the lower patrol at Wood River, Ill., locked through, and got into what they called the lock pool.

"When we came out of the locks, we ran into it. The whole river was frozen north of the locks.

"So, here we are with a wooden hull, with about a quarter-to-a-half inch of ice in front of us, going back to Portage, which was 12 miles.

"I went ashore and called the base, and they said bring it in.

"Fortunately I had a 50-pound Navy-

type anchor, and we took turns standing at the bow. Drop the anchor, move ahead a little bit, drop the anchor, move ahead a little, etc.

"The next day the boat came out of the water, all the boats were being stored for the winter, it was the end of the patrols. It looked like someone had taken a chisel and went along-side the hull, especially the first quarter. I was thinking to myself, wait till my old man sees this.

"After we helped winterize our particular yacht, as well as the other crew's, I was sent to Chattanooga, Tennessee."

### Christmas In Chattanooga: a change from isolation

In Chattanooga they were assigned to relieve the crews on the lock-and-dam patrols, with the main duty being Hales Barr Lock and Dam.

"I was there for Christmas and New Years and for Christmas I got a 72-hour pass," Novotny said. "It just wasn't enough time for the Chattanooga Choo Choo to get me to Chicago and back in time. In those days there were no airports, it was all trains.

"So, I went to what was then a modest form of USO Christmas morning, and they connected me with a married couple from Rockford, Ill. They (the USO) figured we would have something in common. They found another chap, so there were the two of us, and we were directed to their home for dinner at one o'clock. We just talked Illinois, Illinois, Illinois' till five o'clock in the evening.

### On To Nashville:sabotage and wedding rings

Novotny was sent to Nashville, Tenn. for a slightly different type of patrol from the lock and dam watch of Portage and Chattanooga, bridge and shipyard patrols. "The big assignment at Nashville was police duty at the Nashville Bridge Company."

The Nashville Bridge Company was building 150' Patrol Craft for escort duty.

"The problem there was out-and-out sabotage.

"Normally they would have five (boats) in line at their docks, like a production line, and always, at the front of the line,

a fire would break out.

"It took 30 days to wire a ship and just about the finishing touches, bingo there would be a big electrical fire." Someone would be welding, and a fire would mysteriously break out near him, and though suspicious, the company was almost powerless to do anything.

"In those days they needed the skills so bad, Nashville Bridge couldn't afford to fire the guy unless it happened about three times."

Another memory that Nashville held for him was his engagement. "That's where I gave my wife her engagement ring. She came down with my parents on the train."

### Cincinnati: another change in the patrol scene

Novotny was transferred to Cincinnati in January 1943. The Coast Guard patrol base there was, as in many of the other cities, a wooden Army Corps surplus barge with a two story superstructure.

This floating platform was the base of operations for patrols and living quarters and galley for the crews. It was similar to the rifle training facility in St. Charles, with gaps between the slats on the walls.

On the second deck, was a 100-foot long bay full of bunks and the one pot belly stove in the middle. "I wised up quickly. It didn't take a rocket scientist to figure out where it was going to be warm. I picked a top rack next to the stove."

The patrol area from Cincinnati stretched all the way to Paducah, Ky. and included five locks and dams in the Cincinnati area alone. "There is where we did the most dragging for bodies. The deck hands would not be paying attention, or it would be icy, and they would slip off. Then we'd have to look for their bodies."

According to Novotny, the best part about being around the big barge companies was their galleys. "They ate like kings. It was all family style. For example, a T-bone steak about one or two pounds...all you could eat of them. That made the duty a little easier."

Cincinnati was different in other ways too. "In the summer time there was lot

of private boating activity and accidents that we were called out on.

"It was the latter part of May that a 42-foot cruiser, that had just come out of winter storage, blew up. Flames and splinters and steel flying all over, about 500 feet from our barge."

"Needless to say, those people were blown into the water."

### Wedding Bells In Chicago: ten days leave well earned

Almost a year after his marriage proposal in Nashville, Novotny's fiancee was ready to get married.

"She kept writing letters 'you keep telling me you think you're going overseas. When are we going to get married?'"

"I applied for leave in August. Those days, when you were in a year you got 10 days provided you weren't at sea."

So, on August 4, the birthday of the Coast Guard, the Novotnys were married in Chicago, and halfway through their Wisconsin honeymoon, the Coast Guard came looking for him.

"On the middle of the fifth day of my 10-day leave I got a telegram forwarded to where we were honeymooning, and was ordered to report immediately back to Cincinnati."

After calling the base and talking to

the second in command, he was able to finish his honeymoon before returning.

Novotny explained that not long after that, his wife took 30 days leave from her job in Chicago and joined him in Cincinnati, where they stayed in a second story apartment above a delicatessen.

### Orders To Sea Duty: training in Virginia

From Cincinnati, Novotny went by train to Norfolk, Va., for shipboard duty training. It was there that he first experienced some of the downside of being in the military.

"The first thing I noticed when I got off the bus, was a sign in front of a house, it said 'Sailors and Dogs Keep Off The Grass.' This was our reception in Norfolk."

Novotny found out that this was the real military. Out of the rack at 0500 in the cold and dark, calisthenics, muster, chow, and role call before 0800 was not what he was used to.

This was also the first time anyone had taken a serious inventory of Novotny's assets to the military. Based on his college, accounting experience, boating skills, radio experience and private pilots license, he was made a Quartermaster Striker. "As a Seaman First



Richard Novotny poses with his wife, Chrystal, in their den which he has decorated with memorabilia from his time in the Coast Guard.

PA2 W. Scott Epperson

Class, I was now half-a-notch up being a Quartermaster Striker.

"It was an interesting life experience...non-stop training. It was six weeks of constant training, and because everyone was in dungarees, nobody knew who was Navy and who was Coast Guard."

In Norfolk, they were taught aircraft and ship identification among various other shipboard duties, and it was the beginning of what he called his "de-da-de-da" training. "This was Morse code, which was 50% of the quartermaster rate at the time, the other 50% was learning the signal flags with which the alphabet was communicated."

### *Orange, Texas: plank owners of the Leopold*

After six weeks of training, the trainees were ready to be transferred to their ships. Novotny's group was treated to a non-stop train ride from Norfolk down to Orange, Texas where the Destroyer Escorts (DE's) were built. "There were six classes of DE. The one I was assigned to happened to be the *Edsall* class, new crafts built specifically to protect convoys of freighters and tankers carrying war materials overseas."

The cutter was christened the *Leopold* Oct. 18, 1943 after Ensign Leopold who died at Pearl Harbor.

"ENS Leopold's mother was the gal that broke the champagne bottle over the bow."

### *Underway: training and shakedown*

There was still a lot of training to be done. The *Leopold* was built about 30 miles upriver from the Gulf of Mexico, and the trip to the Gulf was an exciting one, because of the swift current and the river's twisty path.

"No sooner did we get into the Gulf, and we got a submarine contact on our sound equipment. The captain scratched

his head for a while, and asked for bearings and distance. Then he made up his mind. He said '180 degree-angle course change and flank speed. Get our ass out of here.'

From Orange, Texas the *Leopold* made stops in Galveston, Texas, New Orleans, Norfolk, Va., and then to Maine to box the compass. From Maine they sailed to Bermuda for gunnery practice.

It was here that they fired all the guns at sleeves, targets towed by airplanes. "Each gun would fire at this target being drawn in front of the coastline of

divisions, each with six Coast Guard manned DE's. This represented all of the 30 Coast Guard DE's.

"At dawn, we came on deck, and as far as the eyes could see, ships all over the place, and DEs running around like rabbits and dogs chasing each other," Novotny added.

"Once we got organized. We were on our way to Africa."

It took 25 to 30 days for the crossing, due to the age of some of the freighters. "Five or six knots was as fast as they could go."

Leaving so close to Christmas meant that they were also underway on New Years Eve, which no one was happy about. But they made up for it, by drinking torpedo fuel. "We decided that we weren't going to need the fuel for the torpedoes," Novotny said.

The fuel they used for the torpedoes was almost 100 per-cent alcohol. They figured that if it was filtered through white bread and mixed with fruit juice, it would be drinkable.

"It's a good thing we didn't need any torpedoes the rest of that trip, because it'd been a sad story if we had. Certainly the CO would have found



*The Destroyer Escort USS Leopold (DE-319) being launched in Orange, Texas June 12, 1943.*

Bermuda. Every second word of the gunnery officers was, 'don't shoot the plane,' but they did."

From Bermuda they went back to New York. The cruise to and from the island was known as the shake down cruise.

### *Christmas Eve 1943: the first crossing*

On Dec. 24, 1943, both convoy and escort group gathered off shore readying for sea. The convoy consisted of freighters and tankers carrying fuel oil, airplanes, trucks, and ammunition...supplies for General Patton for service in the desert. The escort consisted of five Coast Guard

out."

After finishing the escort the *Leopold* crew pulled extra duty in the Straits of Gibraltar and took some shore leave in Algiers, France. The *Leopold* then headed back to New York.

### *The Second Convoy: a fateful March*

On March 1, 1944, a convoy was made up and the escort was readied, this time the destination was England. Unlike the first cruise, this voyage would take them through North Atlantic waters.

For the first week everything went well, but on March 8 that changed. "We were progressing as planned, when at ten minutes till eight our radar boys

picked up an object, a radar target as it was known in those days. Captain Phillips was a glory boy and volunteered to go out and investigate."

"The target was on the starboard side of the convoy, and battle stations were sounded. I was just getting organized to go on my regular watch so I was ready to go.

"I had quite a ways to go to my 20mm gun, and we were really cutting the water. We were at flank speed.

"It was dark, but it seemed to me we might have gone two or three miles from our convoy position. The target happened to be a German submarine, surfaced. They often did that in order to recharge their batteries.

"I was on the starboard side of the ship, and as I turned around I actually saw the submarine.

"The captain then ordered us to open fire with all guns on the port side. The outline of the sub was very, very visible. We were only about 400 yards from our target.

"These (DE's) were uniquely constructed, in that for additional anti-submarine work, the bows were reinforced in order to ram the submarine without inflicting too much damage to the DE, but a lot of damage to any surfaced submarine.

"It was plain to see that Capt. Phillips was going to ram the submarine. We remained at flank speed.

"We opened fire for a matter of 20 seconds and that was it. This was when we learned that there was another submerged submarine. We took the bait of the surfaced sub and ran right into the trap that was set for us.

"When the torpedo exploded, the concussion just blew me overboard.

After coming out of an unconscious state of mind and body, my eyes opened up and I saw a life raft about 10 yards away from me with other people on it.

"So I attempted to swim to the life raft. I discovered then, that my left arm and both of my legs were para-

lyzed. Nonetheless, I made my way to the life raft."

The life raft was only constructed to

*"I discovered then, that my left arm and both of my legs were paralyzed. Nonetheless, I made my way to the life raft."*

accommodate seven men, but they had 14, maybe 15 men using the raft.

In the frigid water they were in, the Navy predicts that life expectancy is about 20 minutes.

"The tendency would be to simply just fall asleep and pass on. Shipmates were trying to hang on themselves, and hang on to their buddy next to them. But there were so many that were expiring from the cold water, you couldn't hold on to all of them. You had to let go."

After what seemed to be about two hours, Novotny saw another destroyer coming towards them. It came up, stopped for a minute, and then, over the PA system, announced that they could not stop and rescue them because they were being fired on by the same submarine that had sunk the Leopold. "He said he'd be back."

"To me it seemed that we were in the water about seven-and-a-half hours." Novotny added that he could see three other rafts.

The rescue ship, turned out to be the USS Joyce, Captained by Robert Wilcox. It took three tries before it could stand still long enough to pick them up out of the water.

Despite the terrible suffering and loss of life; this tragic encounter may have saved hundreds or even thousands of lives during the course of the war. The lessons learned from debriefing the survivors resulted in an immediate fleet alert and changes in Allied tactics. Ship captains would now think twice before blindly charging a surface contact.

When it was over, they had rescued a total of 28 and recovered three bodies. Overall, 171 were dead or missing.

"Of the 28, I was the worse injured."

Those who were picked up continued with the convoy until it reached the port of Londonderry, North Ireland. The 28 were transferred to the hospital there, and, with the exception of Novotny, eventually released.

Novotny spent the first 90 days in a traction bed, with a broken back. He eventually flew back to New York and began his long trek towards recovery.

Novotny was later transferred back to St. Louis. He regained use of his arms and legs, but was medically retired due to the severity of his injuries. He still wears a back brace today but is fully mobile.

### *Looking Back Before Going On*

Today Novotny is a retired savings and loan executive. He and his wife of over 50 years live in Pompano Beach, Fla.

Of the 28 survivors Novotny keeps in touch with about 15 of them. The others are either unreachable or have passed on.

Every year, a reunion is held for the crewmen of the destroyer escorts of World War II. Through the years Novotny has remained friends with many of the sailors of the DE's. One in particular, the Commanding Officer of the USS Joyce, Robert Wilcox, has kept in close contact with him.

It was through him that Novotny was able to acquire the log entry's of March 9 from both the Joyce and the German U-Boat that fired the fatal blow into the Leopold a half century ago.

Novotny proudly displays these and other memorabilia so that no one will forget DE-319, USS Leopold.

The boat? Novotny's dad did get the boat back after the war, after some haggling with the contractor hired to restore the boat to its original condition. His dad later sold the boat. ■

# Surprise Surprise

## MSO Pittsburgh Sneaks Up On Pollution Violators

by PA3 Frank Dunn

Second District Public Affairs

The rolling hills of the Ohio River Valley near Wheeling, W.Va., cradle an area of the Ohio River known as the Hannibal pool.

The pool, bounded upriver by the Pike Island Lock and Dam and down river by the Hannibal Lock and Dam, is sprinkled with commercial facilities and barge fleets.

"This was one of the problem sites in our area of operations, along the Ohio River," said Chief Boatswain's Mate Joseph Fetscher, boarding officer for Coast Guard Marine Safety Office Pittsburgh. "We have a lot of mystery sheens in the evening and off hours."

To combat these illegal actions, a boarding team from MSO Pittsburgh set out on the evening of March 23, to get a better handle on the situation and to get a better understanding of commercial vessel operations at night.

"We wanted to make our presence known to the commercial vessel operators operating on the river at night," Fetscher said. "We had a good idea of how they operated during the daylight hours, when everyone could see them."

According to Fetscher, the boarding team wanted to check if any of the vessels were pumping their oily water from the boat's bilges overboard.

"They are required by federal regulation to have their bilge water disposed of properly and putting it into the river is not it," Fetscher said.

The evening's boarding and interviews went as planned and except for a few strange looks the team felt it accomplished its mission. All of the vessel's compartments were checked. The MSO had received some reports of some illegal dumping through a concealed pipe under the tow's deck. But after inspection nothing was found out of order.

"They were really surprised to see us,"

Fetscher said.

The boarding team, satisfied with their work, then headed for a second vessel which had been involved in several incidents previously in the week. They hoped to speak to the person who was operating the vessel in order to get a better idea of what caused the troubles.

Upon arriving at the location of the vessel the team was informed that the person who had been operating the vessel when the incidents occurred was off the boat being tested for drugs and alcohol. The boarding team then spent a few hours talking with a lawyer of the company who owns the vessel.

After speaking with him they had a better understanding of the problems encountered by the towboat and felt their efforts during the boardings were providing much needed information.

"We have done these in the past, but it was determined we should do these operations more often to maximize our effectiveness with marine safety," Fetscher said.

According to LT John Meehan, a boarding team member with MSO Pittsburgh, when they first started the program they found oil spill violations, boats without proper sanitation devices, unlicensed operators and undocumented vessels.

"They ran the gambit of marine safety violations," he said.

As with any change in Coast Guard operations, there were split opinions about the boardings.

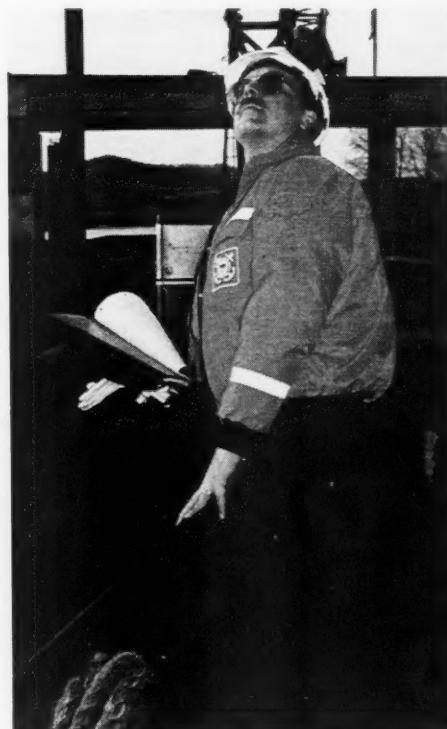
"We are getting two kinds of reactions," Meehan said. "Because of the unfair business advantage of the companies who violate the regulations, the reputable guys are applauding. The guys who

have been taking advantage of noncompliance are not happy," he said. "We are getting a lot of 'where have you guys been, we didn't know these rules were in effect'."

Meehan said, "They have access to the regulations and plenty of opportunity to keep themselves informed."

"We would like to get to a point where they are not surprised to see us and are in compliance with the law," he said.

It was after three in the morning when the team left the pool area and headed home through the small towns of West Virginia and Pennsylvania. And after a few hours of deserved rest, they began planning the next operation. ■



PA3 Frank A. Dunn  
BMC Joseph Fetscher of MSO Pittsburgh inspects one of the many barges boarded during night operations on the Ohio River.

## Remember?

*It wasn't too long ago that the Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois rivers were full of ice. Ice flows clogged locks and dams, created hazards for barge traffic, and closed some sections of rivers in the north. Six months, one small flood, and many buoy changes later, summer is back and the Second District River Tenders are out on the waters doing what they do best.*



## River Race

Rear Admiral Paul M. Blayney, Second District Commander, talks with MR. "C.W." Stoll, secretary to the board of directors, Belle Of Louisville, in the pilot house of the historic 80-year-old steamboat, during the Kentucky Derby Festival Great Steamboat Race. The Steamboat Race has been an annual event since 1963 when the Belle Of Louisville raced the Delta Queen. Delta Queen won this year, improving its record to 15 to 14 over the Belle Of Louisville.



PA2 Rob Haskiewicz

## Central Recruiters Hold Last Convention

Recruiters from around the Central Recruiting Region gathered in St. Louis in May for the last Recruiter's conference to be held by the Central Regional Recruiting Command. Recruiting commands are being consolidated in an effort to streamline services and meet the Coast Guard's budgetary needs.



PA2 Rob Raskewk

*Crew members of CGC Kanawha work a shore aid on the banks of the Arkansas River.*

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